COLORADO
WRP Ranking Factors
Revised October 2003

Applicants Name: _____

Applicants Address: _____ Hydrologic Unit: _____

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Permanent Easement: _____ 30 Year Easement: _____ Restoration Agreement: _____

FIPS: _____ Section: _____ Township: _____ Range: _____

RANKING TEAM INITIALS:

NRCS: _____ USFWS: _____ CDOW: _____ OTHER: _____

ELIGIBILITY AND RANKING INFORMATION:

1. Identify the key plant species and communities here:

2. Identify the key animal species that points are taken for. ***Restoration plan must specifically address the critical habitat needs of these species. If this is not possible do not take points for those species.

3. The following counties currently are at or above the 25% limitation for their cropland acres in CRP. **Cropland** from these counties is ineligible for WRP, **HOWEVER, Non-cropland** acres are eligible for WRP. These counties are Baca, Crowley, Dolores, Kiowa, Las Animas, Lincoln, Moffat, Prowers, Pueblo, and Routt.

4. If habitat for a state or federal threatened or endangered species is negatively impacted with the project, it is ineligible for WRP.

5. Proof of an adequate water source is required. If water rights are necessary, legal documents showing shares or other amounts of water available for the intended use are required. Quantity and availability of water (water rights) must be adequate to meet restoration goals.*****PROOF MUST BE PROVIDED TO THE STATE OFFICE PRIOR TO APPROVAL FOR SURVEY.*****

6. Privately owned parcels will be given priority for funding over publicly owned parcels.

7. You may only pick one value for each ranking factor except on ranking factor 1A.

8. Score points based on expected conditions after the site is restored.

9. Colorado has payment caps of $3,000/acre for the easement payment on perpetual easements ($2,250 for 30-year easements). State Conservationist approval is needed for projects with a restoration cost exceeding $1500 per acre.

10. Use the ranking as is for Restoration Agreements, when determining funding Restoration Agreements will be considered separately from easements.

10. Deepwater ponds (more than 50% of surface area is > 3' deep) are ineligible for WRP.

Ecological Factors

1. LOCATION SIGNIFICANCE:

A. WETLAND TYPE - Colorado is divided into 5 distinct region. Wetland Types are assigned points based on significance in each region. See last page for descriptions of Wetland Types. ***NOTE** – Peatlands are very rare and endangered, however significant restoration is usually not needed or possible. These wetlands will be considered eligible for participation as a State Conservationist designated community of state-wide importance and significance.***

West Slope (state line-7500ft)

1. Riparian	250	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
2. Wet Meadow	200	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
3. Marshland	150	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points

Mountain Parks (N. Prk, M.. Prk, S. Prk, San Luis Valley)

1. Peatland	300	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
2. Riparian	250	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
3. Wet Meadow	200	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
4. Marshland	150	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
5. Upland	0	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points

Montane (7,500 - 14,433 ft)

1. Peatland	300	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
2. Riparian	250	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
3. Wet Meadow	200	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
4. Upland	0	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points

Front Range (I-25 - 7500 ft)

1. Riparian	250	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
2. Marshland	200	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
3. Wet Meadow	150	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
4. Upland	0	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points

Eastern Plains (I-25- state line)

1. Wet Meadow(playa's1/, saline, depressional)	300	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
2. Riparian	250	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
3. Marshland	200	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
4. Upland	0	**X**	_____	acres	=	_____ points
TOTAL			_____	acres		_____ points

POINTS – _____ DIVIDED BY ACRES _____ TIMES 0.15 SUBTOTAL _____

1/ Area must meet saturation criteria for the given area for at least 3 of 5 years to be considered.

B. PROXIMITY TO SIMILAR WETLAND TYPES -

> 1 mile to nearest wetland of similar type	200 points
1/2 to 1 mile	150 points
1/4 to 1/2 mile	100 points
< 1/4 mile - **SEE BONUS POINTS IF ADJACENT TO WRP CONTRACT OR SIMILAR EASEMENT OR PROTECTED AREA	0 points

POINTS – _____ TIMES 0.05 SUBTOTAL _____

2. HABITAT:

A. PROVIDES HABITAT FOR THREATENED, ENDANGERED, RARE, MIGRATORY, OR ENDEMIC SPECIES (pick highest value if more than one applies) -

Project enhances habitat for a state species of concern, a federal and/or state threatened or endangered species, or a federal candidate species	300 points
Enhances habitat for migratory birds and declining native species	200 points

POINTS – _____ TIMES 0.10 SUBTOTAL _____

3. WATER QUALITY:

A. PERCENT OF AREA FORMERLY IN CULTIVATED CROPLAND - Area must be adjacent to a stream/river or wetland that is existing or to be restored.

>90% of the offered acres	400 points
50-89% of the offered acres	300 points
<50% of the offered acres	200 points

POINTS – _____ TIMES 0.05 SUBTOTAL _____

4. HYDROLOGY RESTORATION/ENHANCEMENT:

A. PERCENT OF AREA - This is the acreage to be restored/enhanced or that has been restored/enhanced by another agency or private group that meets NRCS restoration standards.

Riparian Area (Eligibility Criteria D)	300 points
OR	
To be restored on >30% of the offered acres	300 points
To be restored on 20-29% of the offered acres	200 points
To be restored on 10-19% of the offered acres	100 points

Points should be assigned based on the predominant eligibility factor, riparian or wetland.

POINTS – _____ TIMES 0.15 SUBTOTAL _____

B. INCREMENT OF AREA - This factor addresses the relative degree of restoration/enhancement required. If giving points for conditions before it was restored prior to this application, proof is required of those before conditions.

Riparian Area (Eligibility Criteria D)	300 points
OR	
Essentially all (> 90%) of the hydrology has been removed/altered	300 points
Hydrology has been moderately removed/altered	200 points

Points should be assigned based on the predominant eligibility factor, riparian or wetland.

POINTS – _____ TIMES 0.10 SUBTOTAL _____

C. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE - Consider costs that would not normally be a part of a restoration practice. This factor is for practices requiring difficult engineering, are on poor soils, areas of high flows or flow velocity, etc.

Site has no O&M costs exceeding those normally associated with a practice	100 points
Site has several practices with O&M considerations exceeding those for normal practices on normal sites	0 points

POINTS – _____ TIMES 0.10 SUBTOTAL _____

Economic Factors

5. ESTIMATED RESTORATION COST TO NRCS BASED ON PERCENT OF COST SHARE:

To calculate this factor when you have more than one practice, divide the total amount of cost-share that will be paid to the landowner by the total estimated cost for all practices (based on cost list prices). Landowner portion can be reduced by landowner accepting less or a partner agency or organization contributing to restoration costs. Costs can be cash match or in-kind.

PERPETUAL	30 YEAR	RESTORATION	POINTS
0 to 70% of total cost	0 to 45% of total cost	0 to 45% of total cost	300
71 to 80% of total cost	46 to 55% of total cost	46 to 55% of total cost	250
81 to 90% of total cost	56 to 65% of total cost	56 to 65% of total cost	200
91 to 100% of total cost	66 to 75% of total cost	66 to 75% of total cost	100

POINTS – _____ TIMES .10 SUBTOTAL _____

6. ESTIMATED EASEMENT COST TO NRCS PER ACRE:

Points are given when less than NRCS offered value is accepted. Landowner may donate the remaining value or funding for the NRCS portion forgone can be provided by a partner organization or agency.

≤35% of NRCS offered easement payment	400 points
36 to 50% of NRCS offered easement payment	300 points
51 to 65% of NRCS offered easement payment	200 points
66 to 80%of NRCS offered easement payment	150 points
81 to 95% of NRCS offered easement payment	100 points
>95% of NRCS offered easement payment **OR** Restoration Agreement	0 points

POINTS – _____ TIMES .10 SUBTOTAL _____

7. DETERMINATION OF CONTRACT TERM:

Perpetual Easement	300 points
30-year Easement	200 points
Restoration Agreement	200 points

POINTS – _____ TIMES .10 SUBTOTAL _____

BONUS POINTS:

1. ADJACENT TO ANOTHER WRP CONTRACT(S) OR SIMILAR EASEMENT SUCH AS A DUCKS UNLIMITED EASEMENT MANAGED THE SAME AS IT WOULD BE IF WRP.

Adjacent to easement(s) or agreement(s) of similar or longer length	10 points
Within 1 mile of easement(s) or agreement(s) of similar or longer length	5 points

TOTAL POINTS FOR ECOLOGICAL FACTORS (70% OF TOTAL) _____

TOTAL POINTS FOR ECONOMIC FACTORS (30% OF TOTAL) _____

TOTAL BONUS POINTS _____

TOTAL POINTS _____

DESCRIPTIONS

WETLAND TYPES

Peatland is any wetland that accumulates partially decayed plant. This type is further classified into bog and fens with only fens being found in Colorado. Fens receive drainage from surrounding mineral soil and support some marsh-like vegetation. They can prevent or reduce the risk of floods, improve water quality and provide a habitat for unique plant and animal communities. They can be found at low points in the landscape.

Marshland may occur next to open bodies of nonflowing water. Marshes also occur along slow moving streams and rivers. Vegetation can include cattails, bulrush, pondweed, or duckweed. Marshes are a favorite for waterbirds.

Wet Meadow land contains waterlogged soil but not standing water. These often occur near or may include irrigated cropland, hayland (native or introduced), and pastureland. This is the most common wetland type in Colorado. Wet meadows improve the quality of the water while providing habitat for various wildlife.

Riparian areas are the transition zone between uplands and water bodies. This may include intermittent streams and creeks. They generally have a high water table and can be recognized by floodplain and streambank vegetation including trees and shrubs. They are a popular nesting habitat and forage for wildlife including waterbirds.

Playa basins can be defined as rain fed ephemeral wetlands. Playa basins are typically clay lined and vary in size from ¼ acre and up. Vegetation can include hydrophytic, upland, or be non existent depending on frequency of saturation.